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Dangers of Change Approval Process

In today's fast-paced digital landscape, organizations must adapt quickly to user needs and technological advancements. Any application that an organization puts out that is being worked on has many different stakeholder groups involved- each with varying ideas of importance for the application. Any changes that are needed to be made to the application whether they are to resolve bug issues, new feature additions, or basic quality of life updates must be approved prior to work beginning on them or implemented. Maintaining secure control of the application will ensure that a highly functional application is up and running as consistent as possible. The change approval process is one of the methods in ensuring that consistent quality is maintained. While the change approval process does work to maintain the quality of the application it does have some drawbacks: timeliness and prioritization.

For example, Facebook is experiencing an error on occasion where users are logging out but then on page refresh are automatically logged back in without their knowledge. This issue would be reported by users and then sent to the Change Approval process. Some organizations have Change Advisory Boards composed of various stakeholders such as various department representatives. The Change Advisory Board take the review and places the importance of updating and resolving this issue within the existing queue of work to be completed. In theory this is a quick and easy agenda, but most Change Advisory Boards are secondary or tertiary responsibilities for most employees within an organization. The regularly scheduled meetings whether those are daily or weekly must have all new changes reviewed on a consistent basis within the predetermined time frame- if it is not resolved at this time may be tabled until the next meeting which depending on the frequency of meetings could be 24 hours or longer. These delays can cause issues if bugs are not addressed in timely manner. Change Advisory Boards will be made up of various stakeholders each with their own agendas and departments to represent. A stakeholder representing marketing will have vastly different ideas for the importance of items compared to someone from the Development or Quality Assurance departments.

Timeliness and priorities are some of the biggest risks with the Change Approval process. Our examples with the Change Advisory Boards are slightly extreme but there are different approaches to the change approval process. There can be a single, tiered, or even multiple approval approaches as well. Each do as well fall with the same two issues of timeliness and prioritization. The single change approval approach means that instead of a change approval board making the decisions it is a single person within the organization. That person’s role is to approve changes, assign tasks to the appropriate departments, and alert shareholders as needed of updates. The tiered approval process will have multiple layers of approval status, some senior stakeholders may be required to approve and assign items due to the importance of implementation. Lastly the multiple approve will need more than one person such as 3 out of 15 approvers to confirm the change is needed or warranted, but this can be done asynchronously, not requiring meetings and discussions like a Change Advisory Board. Each of these approval types still suffer from the timeliness and prioritization issues. The single approval approach can definitely become overwhelming if an application becomes big enough causing delays if that person is not maintaining the change approval process or if they are unavailable for an extended period of time. The tiered approval process and the multiple approvers are involving more hands in the pot so to speak again slowing down and causing time to slip by as changes must be reviewed and certified. Each of these approaches requires the bias of the individual to be set aside or a predetermined approach of changes to be made when the associates are chosen to head the approval process.

the change approval process is a double-edged sword for organizations striving to maintain high-quality applications. While it serves as a safeguard against unchecked modifications, the inherent delays and prioritization conflicts can severely hinder an organization’s responsiveness to urgent issues and market demands. By examining various approval approaches and their shortcomings, it becomes evident that a more streamlined and transparent process is necessary. Implementing strategies such as an internal impact scoring system can help organizations prioritize changes based on urgency and significance, ultimately reducing biases and improving response times. As businesses continue to navigate an ever-evolving technological landscape, refining the change approval process will be crucial for maintaining competitiveness and enhancing user satisfaction.

Works Cited

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